



read with me

developing early literacy with children

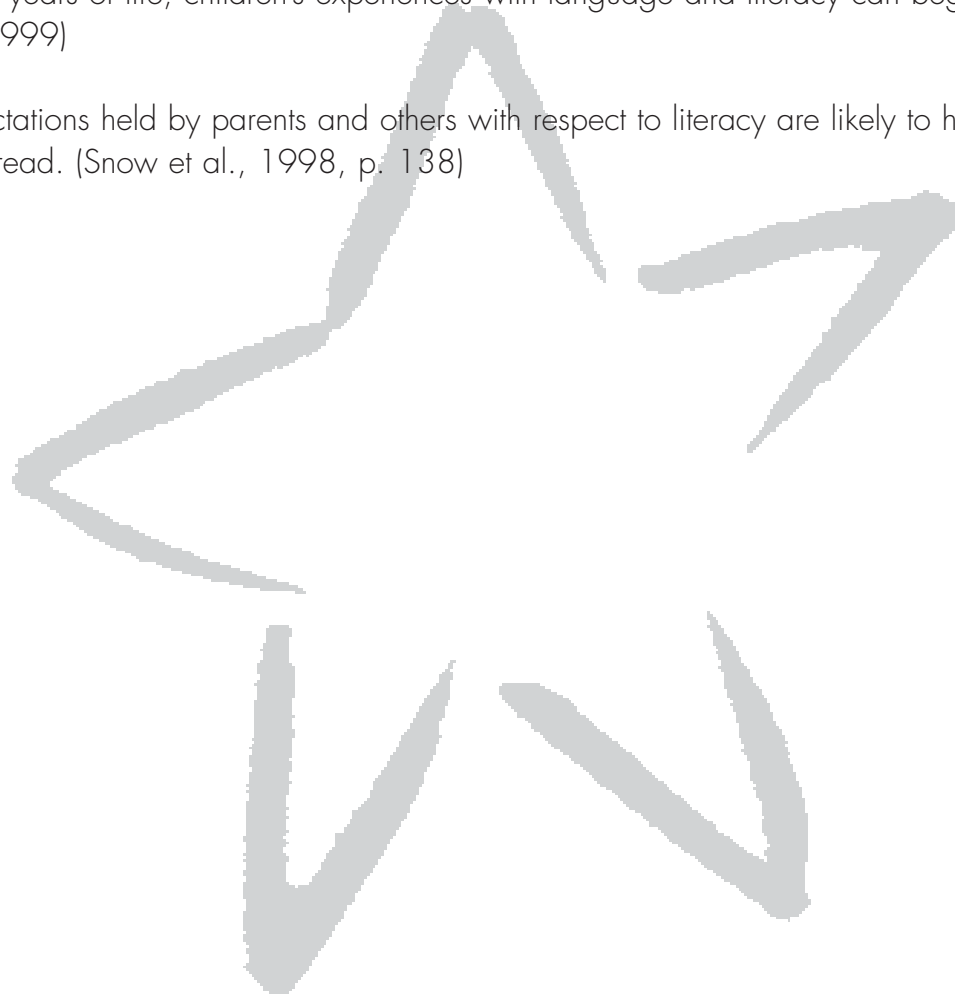


A Guide to Early Literacy



You are Your Child's First Teacher

- Children who have many literacy experiences as toddlers and preschoolers come to school ready to learn. (Allington & Walmsley, 1995).
- During the first months and years of life, children's experiences with language and literacy can begin to form a basis for their later reading success. (Burns, 1999)
- Values, attitude, and expectations held by parents and others with respect to literacy are likely to have a lasting effect on a child's attitude about learning to read. (Snow et al., 1998, p. 138)



Daily Routines

Place a star next to the activities that you already do. Circle or underline the activities you would like to do with your child.

Playtime:

- Describe toys: talk about their colors, textures and special features.
- Read storybooks.
- Ask your child to pick up toys by describing them. For instance, ask "Jose, please pick up the toy that has four blue wheels."

Getting Dressed:

- Label and describe clothes: talk about color, style and textures.

Writing:

- Provide a special place for writing and art activities.
- When your child draws a picture, encourage her to write a sentence or story to describe the picture.
- Encourage your child to write notes to relatives or friends.
- Collect old magazines for children to cut pictures or familiar words out of.
- Leave notes for your child, even if he/she can't read them yet. Ideas: "Thank you!" "Good Morning!" and "I Love You!"

Bath time:

- Label and describe the activities of bath time: slippery soap, warm water, bubbles.
- Use new words every night as you talk with your child.
- Sing songs during bath time.
- Tell stories to your child.

Meal time:

- Talk about the foods you are preparing and the color, texture, smell and taste.
- Talk about how small you are cutting the pieces and how you are cooking the food.
- Describe how to set the table, and demonstrate how to say "please" and "thank you" while sharing food at the table.
- Leave notes in your child's lunchbox or school bag.
- Cook and bake with your child.
- Browse cookbooks together and choose recipes you both like.
- When you need a grocery list, make one together.
- Create recipes of your own and write them down.

Watching Television:

- Watch children's videos or television together.
- Discuss the characters and their actions.
- Collect words your child can read in a notebook or on 3-by-5-inch note cards.

Helping Your Child Get Ready to Read



Fun with Words

- Read your child's scribbles.
- Repeat words you say and read.
- Point out new words and create word plays.
- Share rhymes.
- Do finger plays.
- Act out stories.

Building Your Child's Vocabulary

- Write letter books.
- Do chants, sing songs and play clapping games.
- Play games like Hide and Seek, I Spy and puzzles.
- Make adult-recorded stories.
- Talk with your child in complete sentences.

Saying More Words

- Make books together.
- Say specific words for objects.
- Talk while watching television together.
- Match sounds to letters.
- Sing.
- Put on plays.
- Retell or draw stories.
- Create family story projects.

Reading and Writing Together

- Read books every day with your child
- Read a variety of types of books.
- Read books after meals and at bedtime.
- Encourage your child to choose books he wants to read.
- Provide crayons and markers and paper for writing.



reading

Language Has a Rhythm

Nursery Rhymes

Example: "Jack and Jill"

Songs and Singing

Example: "Lullaby"

Chants and Poems

Example: "I Scream"

Rhyming Words or Nonsense Words

Example: "Silly Sally sings songs."

Having Fun with Real and Silly Words

-ay

jay
say
pay
day
play

-at

cat
fat
bat
rat
sat

-ack

back
sack
Jack
black
track

-am

ham
jam
dam
ram
Sam

-ap

cap
map
tap
clap
trap

-ag

bag
rag
tag
wag
sag

-ank

bank
sank
tank
blank
drank

-ot

pot
not
hot
dot
got

-ip

ship
dip
tip
skip
trip

-ill

hill
bill
will
fill
spill

-ick

sick
pick
wick
kick
lick

-ing

ring
sing
king
wing
thing

-ell

bell
sell
fell
tell
yell

-unk

sunk
junk
bunk
flunk
skunk

Itsy Bitsy Spider

The itsy bitsy spider
Crawled up the water sprout

Down came the rain
And washed the spider out

Out came the sun
And dried up all the rain

And the itsy bitsy spider
Crawled up the sprout again.



spider

Importance of Having Fun With Words



- Your child learns patterns and predictability.
- It allows you to hear your child's ideas.
- It lets you encourage their thinking to expand vocabulary and ideas.
- It gives them a headstart on learning to read.

More Ways to Have Fun With Words:

- Check out books on tape from the library.
- Make charts of fun or interesting words with a child. (Color words, names, action words, rhyming words, words that start with the same letter.)
- Invite your child to make alphabet books or posters.
- Provide opportunities for your child to make up sentences, rhymes, finger plays to learn the melody of language.
- Point out words as you read.
- Create silly words and rhymes.

Extending Oral Language

Our vocabulary is learned by listening to others. The names of objects (nouns) are basic to meaning and comprehension.

- Think about the various rooms in your house. Pick one room and list all the objects (names of things) in the space below.

- Now, pick two objects from your list and write two more words that describe each object.
(Example: lamp – tall, funny shade)

1.

2.

- Now write a sentence using the original object plus the two additional words. Look how you were able to extend your speaking vocabulary! (Example: The big lamp has a funny shade with cowboys on it.)

So when your child says “lamp, lamp” you will be able to respond with “Yes, the big lamp has a funny shade with cowboys on it.”

Labeling

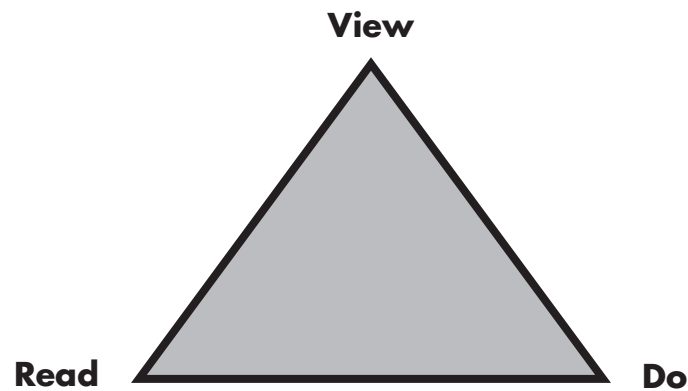


Write down all the signs or words that your child can read or recognize in the car.

Creating print materials is a fun and easy activity to do with your child. After your next trip to some place special, sit down with your child and make a book or poster together. Put it in a place where you can read it every day.

Viewing Television

Reading and literacy skills do not develop in isolation. Part of developing literacy skills is interacting with people and the world around you. Television is a very influential part of our culture and can play a dominant role in the lives of many children. By viewing positive educational television, children will enhance their literacy skills.



Follow these simple steps:

- **View** a children's show that introduces and explores a topic with your child.
- **Read** a related book that reinforces literacy or other learning skills.
- **Do** something fun and active that extends the learning and helps your child practice self-expression and listening skills.

The View-Read-Do model is an educationally sound way to use television with children.



*This information is recommended by the Ready to Learn Department of PBS.



Name Books



Create a Name Book

- On the cover page, write your child's name and let him draw a picture.
- On each of the following pages, write one letter of the child's name.
- On each page, draw or cut out pictures that begin with the same sound of the letter on the page.

Create a Book About What Your Child Likes

- Create a book about the things your child likes to do or eat.
- Find or draw pictures to illustrate the text.

Example:

Ryan likes

Page 1

Ryan likes books.

Pages 2 - 4

Repeat the beginning Ryan likes three times, writing it at the bottom of the page and attaching a picture.

Page 5

But Ryan doesn't like _____.

Create a Family Book

- Using the text provided to create a paper book about your family by attaching photos of the members of your family.

This is Ryan's family.

This is _____.

This is _____.

This is _____.

Ryan loves his family.

Questions to Ask About Names

- How many letters does it have?
- How many tall letters?
- How many short letters?
- How many letters with sticks?
- How many letters with a circle?
- How many letters with dots?
- How many parts does it have? Clap it. Count it.
- Do you know anyone else with your name?
- Tell me a word that starts with the same sound as your name.

Steps for an Adult Recorded Story



- Have your child tell you what she wants you to write or have her describe what her drawing says.
- After you have written your child's story at the bottom of the drawing or on a blank page, read it to your child.
- Draw a colored line beneath each word as you reread your child's story.
- Ask your child to read what you have written. As he reads, point to each word.
- Help your child write (or scribble) her name at the bottom of the story, so as to sign her story as an author signs his story.
- Give your child the choice of drawing a picture to go with the story or acting out the story with you.
- Mount the story and/or drawing on the refrigerator or at a special place in your home.

Types of Books for Children



Predictable books:

These stories are popular with young children because they quickly pick up the repeating patterns of the language. They will oftentimes select these books as they can build self-esteem and good attitudes toward reading.

Alborough, J. (2002.) *Duck in the Truck*. New York: HarperCollins.

Dr. Seuss. (1960). *Green Eggs and Ham*. New York: Random House.

Wordless books:

These books are excellent for oral language development because the pictures drive the message.

Thus, you could reread a book many times and change the message every time.

Pictures allow your child to use her imagination and to draw on familiar experiences.

Hoban, T., (1992). *Look Up, Look Down*. New York: Greenwillow.

Concept books:

These books generally focus on an idea, such as a shape, a color, time of the season, numbers or ABC's.

They are excellent for developing the exact labels and names of common objects in a more conversational setting with your child.

Martin, B, Jr. (2003). *Panda Bear, Panda Bear, What Do You See?* New York: Holt.

Poetry:

This book reinforces the rhyme and sound patterns of words and our language.

They are easy to remember and can be used to link known words to new words in vocabulary development.

Hoberman, M. (2001). *You Read to Me, I'll Read to You*. New York: Little, Brown.

Information books:

Information books open a new world of knowledge.

If your child is interested in a topic such as dogs, find a book with lots of pictures and share the information as you read it together.

Carle, E. (1999). *From Head to Toe*. New York: HarperCollins.

Rockwell, A. (2001). *Bugs are Insects*. New York: HarperCollins.

Why Scribbling is Important



You learn to crawl before you walk,
You learn to babble before you talk,
You learn to scribble before you draw,
You learn to draw before you write!

Stages of Scribbling:

Stage 1: Marks (Toddlers: age 1 1/2 years to 3 years)

- Love to make marks, love the movement, love to see what they have made.
- Lack good motor control and hand-eye coordination.
- Lack direction or purpose for marks.
- Do not mentally connect their own movements to marks on a page.
- Begin to make marks with intention and not by chance.

Stage 2: Shapes (Preschool: age 3-4 years)

- Enjoy mastery over lines.
- Master basic forms and discover the connection between their own movements and marks on the page.
- Discover that closing a line creates a shape.

Stage 3: Designs

- Combine lines, dots and shapes for beautiful designs.
- Understand that print carries a message.

Stage 4: Thoughts (Ages 4-5 years and up)

- Communicate with the outside world through drawing, express personality and relationship to symbols drawn.
- Combine basic forms to create first symbols
- Drawing something leads to greater understanding.
- Combine lines and shapes to create something. (Example: a circle shape, straight lines and radials make Mommy!)
- Use one hand regularly.
- Draw, write or scribble from left to right across the page.

Why Scribbling is Important



Stage 5: Letters

- Usually begin with making their own name.

Stage 6: Words

- String letters together to spell words.
- Write with spaces between words.
- Write uppercase and lowercase letters.
- Write some known words.
- Write with some punctuation.

Summary

- All children go through these developmental stages of art.
- Art prepares children for other cognitive achievements that adults are anxious about. (But don't rush your child!)
- When allowed to have plenty of art experiences, most children will be well prepared for writing, language arts, science and math by ages 5 and 6.
- Don't put the cart before the horse!
- Celebrate all writing attempts!!

Scribbling is really learning!

Success With Writing



- Keep the messages predictable at first, so children will find them easy to read.
- Model the process daily, and have children write their own messages two to three times a week.
- Give children time to write every day.
- Support children as they sound out words. Ask, "What do you think it starts with? Listen to me say the word. Do you hear any other sounds?"
- When you write or draw something, tell the child that the writing or drawing has meaning by writing the words that the picture says to your child on the picture.
- Point to the words as you read. Ask children to point to words as you engage in shared readings.
- Keep what you write in a book, folder or notebook.

Writing and Building Vocabulary

The following activities can become fun ways to build your child's vocabulary through saying or writing his name and learning new words as you run errands:

- Look for opportunities to help your child find the initial letter of her own name. Many three-year-olds delight in identifying "my letter" in words seen on TV, labels and printed on signs.
- Write, display and point out the child's name often. Print it on his artwork and help him recognize it.
- As your child gets older, help her learn to recognize additional words she frequently sees printed in the world around her: for example, a word on a favorite T-shirt, stop sign and other favorites, such as "zoo" "mom" and "dad."
- Watch TV programs such as Sesame Street with your child and learn the "Letter Song" together.

Literacy Activities for Children by Age



Infants: Birth to One Year What We Know They Can Do

See and quickly recognize the differences in shapes.

Learn names of objects in their environment.

Explore their world physically and with their senses. Think books are objects to be manipulated, tasted and torn.

Like to touch books and objects that have a different feel and books with inserts that can be touched and described.

Have a short attention span. Will not attend to the story as much as the bright pictures and single words that you say.

“Fun With Words” Activities

Show familiar household objects and talk about them. Select objects that have bright colors.

Tell the names of familiar objects. Show the object and then point to the same object as it is pictured on a page, such as a sock, shoe, cup.

Use books that are sturdy, made of thick cardboard, cloth or washable plastic.

Use books that have soft fur or shiny or colorful objects, such as board books.

Read books that have few pages or are designed to be shared only a few pages at a time. Repeat the labeled names of objects that catch your infant’s attention.

Toddlers: One to Two Years What We Know They Can Do

Enjoy the sounds of their language.

Hold books and learn that words move across a page from left to right.

Talk about books, enjoy pop-up books and like to turn pages.

Hear differences in sound.

Speak through a puppet and say words in ways they normally do not.

“Fun With Words” Activities

Create sentences using rhyming or alliteration (words that begin with the same letter), such as “Annie’s alligator ate ants.” Repeat it over and over again with them. They will also create funny words and want you to say their funny, made-up words with them.

Use books made of plastic, cloth or cardboard that will not tear as children touch, point and turn pages. Glide your hand across the line of text as you read.

Choose books, such as Where’s My Fuzzy Blanket? that have lots of discovery for children.

Choose read-and-sing-aloud books and poems with a lot of rhymes.

Give child a puppet who can retell the story you’ve read or make up a new story.



Literacy Activities for Children by Age

Young Preschoolers: Two to Three Years What We Know They Can Do

Begin to express themselves by scribbling.
Point out familiar logos and symbols such as McDonald's®.

Enjoy listening to storybooks and retelling familiar simple stories.

Begin to use objects to represent other things, like a block that becomes a bed in *The Three Bears*.

Place objects, spoken words or ideas in groups that share common traits.

Older Preschoolers: Three to Five Years What We Know They Can Do

Start to write notes and begin to recognize letters.
Enjoy private time to read and look at a wide variety of books.
Realize that words serve a purpose and are used to accomplish important tasks.
Begin to want to have printed materials that are all their own.
Want to have one special place where you usually read to them.

"Fun With Words" Activities

Allow for scribbling. Give blank pages to write on.

Cut out familiar logos and create a picture book. Write a story at the bottom of each page with your child as the main character.

Choose books that have a character repeating one thing over and over so the story is easy to follow.

Use props and act out a story. Follow your child's lead as he becomes a character who does things differently than the main character in the book.

Cut out pictures from magazines or grocery flyers so your child can sort them into common groups. Ask him to sort pictures in two groups: Food/Toys or Can Eat/Can not Eat.

"Fun With Words" Activities

Point out, say and write letters in the alphabet.

Have lots of books for them to see. Get a library card for your child.

Point to each word as you cook from a recipe or make a grocery list.

Make a special place for your child's books.

Find a favorite chair where you and your child can read together every day.

Follow Your Child's Lead



- Ask questions that require your child to reply in sentences, instead of just with a “yes” or “no” answer.
- Roleplay with your child.
- Praise independent problem solving.
- Praise your child for using new words and complete sentences.
- Try not to use baby talk.
- Ask your child to say the exact name for the things he does and the things he wants.
- Ask your child to describe what she is doing or feeling.
- Play games that involve new pictures or words.

Conversations

Conversation is the most important way to build the number of words your child knows. Children learn words that they hear, say, read or write.

- Play label games, such as: “Where’s your nose?”
- Verbally label objects in your child’s world.
- Talk with your child during routines, such as baths and meal times.
- Turn off the car radio and talk together while you drive.
- Watch children’s television programs together and talk about them.
- Make regular time to talk with your child.

Stories, Songs and Fingerplays

Five Little Monkeys

Five little monkeys jumping on the bed,
One fell off and bumped his head.
Mama called the doctor and the doctor said,
"No more monkeys jumping on the bed."
Four little monkeys jumping on the bed,
One fell off and bumped his head...

*Count out pennies or objects together as you sing this song.

Reading to Children

Ask questions

- What did you see?
- What did you notice?
- Why do you think that happened?
- What are you thinking now?
- What surprised you?
- What have you learned?
- Does this remind you of anything you have done before?

Use pictures

- Encourage children to predict what will happen next.
- Reread to clarify meaning.
- Relate what they read to their own lives.
- Act out parts of the story or use different voices for different characters.
- Name and describe objects and events.
- Point out things of special interest.

Stages of Reading to Children

Before Reading:

- Help your child make a personal connection to the book.
 - Set a purpose.

During Reading:

- Make predictions.
- Pause occasionally and review what has happened so far.
 - Reread the book and read it differently.

After Reading:

- Make personal connections.
 - Create reenactments.
 - Perform retellings.

Frequent Concerns About Reading

If You Think You Are Not a Good Reader:

- Tell stories about your experiences.
- Tell stories about pictures in a photo album.
- Sing songs or nursery rhymes that you know.
- Listen to books on tape.
- Take your child to storytime at the local library.
- Ask someone else to read to your child.
- Improve your own reading skills.

How to Choose a Great Book:

- Consider the interests and experiences of your child.
- Select books that are recommended.
- Read books that your child asks to have reread over and over again.

Child Often Says “I Don’t Know”

- Ask child to point to picture or word that answers your question.
- Stop before the end of a book and ask your child to tell you the ending he would like best.
- Watch a TV show or movie of the book. Then, read the book. Ask your child to tell you how the book and movie are the same and different.

If Your Child Becomes Restless:

- It’s okay to stop reading at any point in the book.
- Come back to the book at the point you left off.
- Try a different book.
- Stop to talk about a picture to which the child is pointing.
- Hold your child’s hand in yours and write a word from a book together.
- Encourage your child to “read” along with you as you point to the words.

You Don’t Feel Like You Have Enough Time:

- Snuggle while you read.
- Think about how you feel while you read to your child.
- Think about how your child feels when you read to her.
- Think about the reasons that it might be hard to find time to read each day.
- Find ways to make more time in the day to read to your child.
- Ask yourself how you would rate reading with your child.

Books For Children



Picture Books

Abuela by Author Dorros.
Animals Should Definitely Not Wear Clothing by Judi Barrett.
Anansi and the Moss-covered Rock by Eric A. Kimmel.
Blueberries for Sal by Robert McCloskey.
Bread and Jam for Frances by Russell Hoban.
Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? By Bill Martin, Jr.
Caps for Sale by Esphyr Slobodkina.
The Carrot Seed by Ruth Krauss.
A Chair for My Mother by Vera B. Williams.
Corduroy by Don Freeman.
Curious George by H.A. Rey.
If You Give a Mouse a Cookie by Laura J. Numeroff.
The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats.
Strega Nona by Tomie De Paola.
Swimmy by Leo Lionni.
The Tale of Peter Rabbit by Beatrix Potter.
There's a Nightmare in My Closet by Mercer Mayer.
Too Many Tamales by Gary Soto.
The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle.
The Wheels on the Bus by Paul O. Zelinsky.
Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak.
Whistle for Willie by Ezra Jack Keats.

Wordless Picture Books

Will's Mammoth by Rafe Martin
Niki's Walk by Jane Tanner
Deep in the Forest by Brinton Turkle
Do You Want to Be My Friend? by Eric Carle
Free Fall by David Weisner
The Snowman by R. Briggs
Good Dog Carl by A. Day
The Story of a Little Mouse Trapped in a Book by M. Felix
Rosie's Walk by P. Hutchins
Frog Goes to Dinner by Mercer Mayer
Deep in the Forest by B. Turkle

Bedtime Books

Goodnight, Moon by Margaret Wise Brown.
The Napping House by Audrey Wood.
Bedtime for Frances by Russell Hoban.
How Do Dinosaurs Say Goodnight? by Jane Yolen.
Guess How Much I Love You by Sam McBrantney.

Predictable Books

The Three Billy Goats Gruff by Paul Galdone.
Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? by Bill Martin, Jr.
We're Going on a Bear Hunt by Michael Rosen.
Jump, Frog, Jump! by Robert Kalan.

Books For Children



Concept Books

Big Dog...Little Dog by P.D. Eastman.
My Five Senses by Alikei.
The Grouchy Ladybug by Eric Carle.
What Color is It? by Pamela Cote.
Hello, Ocean by Pam Muñoz Ryan.

Family Stories

Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day by Judith Viorst.
Clifford's Family by Norman Bridwell.
Chrysanthemum by Kevin Henkes.
The Kissing Hand by Audrey Penn.
Franklin and Harriet by Paulette Bourgeois.

Once Upon a Time Books

A Pocket for Corduroy by Don Freeman.
The Paper Bag Princess by Robert Munsch.
Sylvester and the Magic Pebble by William Steig.
The Polar Express by Chris Van Allsburg.
Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak.

Poetry Books

Tomie dePaola's Mother Goose by Tomie dePaola.
Chicka Chicka Boom Boom by Bill Martin, Jr.
Light in the Attic by Shel Silverstein.
Chicken Soup with Rice: A Book of Months by Maurice Sendak.
The Lorax by Dr. Seuss.

Oral Language Books

There Was An Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly by P. Adams.
Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed by Eileen Christelow.
In the Small, Small Pond by Denise Fleming.
Is Your Mama a Llama? By Deborah Guarino.
Five Little Ducks by Raffi.

Books to Get Your Child Ready for Kindergarten

Blue Hat, Green Hat by Sandra Boyton.
Spot Goes to School by Eric Hill.
Leo the Late Bloomer by Robert Kraus.
Monster Goes to School by Virginia Mueller.

Folk Tales and Fables

The Gingerbread Boy by Paul Galdone.
The Three Little Pigs by Paul Galdone.
The Elves and the Shoemaker by Paul Galdone.
The Three Bears by Paul Galdone.

Web site Resources



Ready for Life: www.readyforlife.org

PBS Ready to Learn: www.pbskids.org/readytolearn

Reading Rockets: www.readingrockets.org

Reading is Fundamental: www.rif.org

National Association for Education of Young Children: www.naeyc.org

Association of Childhood Education International: www.acei.org

International Reading Association: www.reading.org

The Internet Public Library Youth Division: www.ipl.org/youth/

The Partnership for Reading: www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading

Parent Information Network (NPIN): www.npin.org

Family Management: www.familymanagement.com

State Center for Early Childhood Development (Texas) Circle Literacy Components: www.uth.tmc.edu/circle

Action Alliance for Children: www.4children.org

Childcraft: www.childcraft.com

Lakestore Teacher Supply Stores: www.lakeshorelearning.com

Zero to Three: www.zerotothree.org



read with me

Understanding the process of early literacy will help you develop a great foundation for your child or the children in your care. By creating literacy opportunities with your child, you will give him the skills to be successful in reading.

Preparing a child to read does not mean that you have to be a classroom teacher. It means taking advantage of opportunities that arise in daily life to help your child get ready to read. Often, these are unplanned, casual acts like commenting about words on an article of clothing or encouraging children to talk more when you are having a conversation. It may also be making an effort to read good books with children and tell them what new words mean and helping them to use these new words. Getting your child ready to read also means singing songs, playing games and playing with your child.

Children who have many literacy experiences as toddlers and preschoolers come to school ready to learn. During the first months and years of life, children's experience with language and literacy can begin to form a basis for later reading success. The more children know about language and literacy before they start school, the better equipped they are to succeed. One of the best indicators of children's school success is not the family income or level of education but rather the extent to which the parents are concerned with their child's education and their involvement with the school.

For more information about other curriculum materials and training opportunities, contact Ready for Life, 3000 Harry Hines Blvd., Dallas, TX 75201 or visit our website at www.readyforlife.org.

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